

Community Newsletter

January 2023 Edition



Note from Mayor Meghan F. George



Happy New Year! The last twelve months have been another hectic but highly productive year here at City Hall. I'm proud of the exceptional work being done by all of our team – here are a few highlights of what we were able to achieve together this past year.

Cove Community Center Opens. Cove Community Center opened and united the City's human services work in an easily accessible facility to serve Lakewood's seniors, families, and youngsters. Services available include senior nutrition, transportation, and activity programs; the Lakewood Family Room; Help to Others (H2O) youth program; community based social work services; the juvenile diversion program; and flexible meeting spaces.

Neighborhood Paramedic Program Launches. The City created a neighborhood paramedic program focused on preventing injuries and addressing medical issues before they elevate to a hospital or emergency room visit. The initial focus is fall prevention for seniors through home visits to avoid trip-and-fall situations. The program launch was supported by a \$70,000 start-up grant from the Healthy Lakewood Foundation.

Car Seat Fit Stop Returns. Our Fire Department's car seat safety program returned this year post-COVID, allowing residents to have trained members of the department check and help install child safety seats in vehicles. This has been a huge hit, with high attendance at all of our monthly events.

Using ARPA Dollars for Police Capacity. We used ARPA dollars to help increase our authorized police officers by four to a maximum of 99. This will keep staffing at key thresholds and avoid any reductions in service while we deal with attrition from retirements, industry-wide challenges with recruitment, and lengthy onboarding for new officers. We have also continued strategic investments in equipment such as cameras and radios.

Building Codes and Inspections. We did a deep dive on our building code, adding stiffer penalties for violations in large buildings and requirements that large buildings and parking structures regularly obtain a structural engineer's report on building conditions. We also instituted the first formal survey process to assess the condition of all of the 1,500 commercial buildings in Lakewood.

Downtown Development Momentum. The City developed a formal term sheet with CASTO to redevelop the former Lakewood Hospital site. The deal will also retain one of Lakewood's largest and growing employers, Roundstone Insurance. The project includes the city's largest new housing development in decades; a public plaza; commercial and retail space; and an increase to our municipal tax base. Site work began this fall, and our local committees are helping to guide finishing touches on design as we move toward a 2023 construction launch.

Studio West. The City was happy to see phase one of this impressive and innovative

project open late this year. Our team in the Planning and Development Department continues to work with the project developers to provide assistance as they realize their unique vision.

ARPA Support for Clean Water Infrastructure . The City's integrated wet weather plan (IWWIP) was adopted years to protect our Great Lake and the Rocky River – but it also placed a large burden on our ratepayers. With that in mind, when Lakewood obtained tens of millions in ARPA dollars, we dedicated \$25 million to help ensure a reduction in costs to our ratepayers, an investment that will pay off for decades.

Snow and Ice Control Plan. We announced the City's first formal snow and ice control plan, to fully align and clarifies our strategy across departments and increase capacity. New aspects in the plan range from ways to deploy more plows on City vehicles to policy changes that ensure additional personnel to cover holiday and weekends. The plan also includes a pilot project to provide free salt to residents for use in keeping home sidewalks walkable.

Foster Pool Revitalization. Following the summer swim season, the City began construction on a multi-million dollar project to revitalize this beloved community asset. When completed, Foster Pool will have improved accessibility, a new competition and recreation pool, water play amenities area, splash pad, and bathhouse renovations. The project also solves a longstanding leakage issue that caused an annual loss of one million gallons of chlorinated water.

Recycling & Refuse Facility / Animal Shelter: The City began construction on a new Berea Road facility that will serve multiple purposes, including streamlining and improving recycling and refuse services and an updated facility for humane treatment of stray animals, while allowing space to be freed up for the buildout of our water and sewer infrastructure in the Metroparks.

Green Initiatives. Lakewood continued its commitment to evolving our municipal fleet of vehicles, with older gas powered cars being replaced by fully electric or hybrid vehicles. The City also updated our tree plan this year and planted more than 400 new trees, with a special focus on our parks and areas with less canopy coverage.

As we enter 2023, I look forward to continuing to speak with all of you about your hopes and priorities for our wonderful City in the new year.

Mayor Meghan F. George

Upcoming Events & Updates

Sunday, January 8- Car Seat Safety Check

The City of Lakewood Fire Department is hosting a Car Seat Safety Check 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at Fire Station #1, 14601 Madison Avenue. This free event is open to Lakewood families who are interested in having fire department personnel install their child safety seats installed or checked for proper set up. Click [here](#) to register.



Grand Opening: The Bistro at Cove Community Center

The City of Lakewood celebrated the grand opening of The Bistro at the Cove Community Center on December 21st, 2022. In partnership with the [HELP Foundation](#), The Bistro serves delicious healthy food



and beverage options while providing vocational training to members of the Lakewood community.

The Bistro is open to the public Monday through Friday from 8am to 2pm. Be sure to stop by and give it a try!

New Public Works Director Chris Gordon

Welcome Chris Gordon, the new Public Works Director for the City of Lakewood. Chris comes to the City of Lakewood from the City of Shaker Heights where he has worked for the last 12 years. Chris served in a few roles with the City of Shaker Heights, most recently as the Superintendent of Public Works. Chris brings to the role a solid background in public works management, business administration, and communications.

Chris lives in Mentor with his two young daughters, Mila and Kinsley, and longtime girlfriend, Elaina. In his free time Chris loves spending time with his family, sports, golfing, and being active. Chris shared that he is "excited to serve the City of Lakewood, work with the many great Public Works Department employees, and for the new challenges and duties that come with the role".



Cocoa and Cookies with a Cop

The Lakewood Police Department teamed up with the Lakewood Fire Department and the Cove Community Center to host the first ever Cocoa and Cookies with a Cop.

Everyone was invited to sip on hot cocoa and decorate holiday cookies with their neighborhood police officers and paramedic. Not only were nearly 200

cookies decorated, but everyone who participated was able to walk away with a smile and a book donated by the Lakewood Public Library.

Cocoa and Cookies with a Cop was a holiday themed twist to the traditional Coffee with a Cop events that are hosted monthly at local business around the area. Check out the [Lakewood Police Facebook page](#) to for the updates about the next Coffee with a Cop.

We are Hiring!

The City of Lakewood is currently seeking applicants for the following openings:

- Accounting Specialist - Finance Department
- City Planner/Senior City Planner
- Public Works Division Manager

For more information and to apply, please click [here](#).

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HIRING**

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